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SANDINISTS SAY U.S. ARMS THE REBELS

Leader Charges Washington
Seeks New Guerrilla Front
on Costa Rican Border

By MARLISE SIMONS

Special to The New York Times

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, April 26 — The Nicaraguan Government has accused the Reagan Administration of sending arms to a new rebel front on its southern border with Costa Rica.

"We have absolute certainty that the Central Intelligence Agency has sent bazookas, Chinese A.K. rifles and 60- and 81-millimeter mortars to Costa Rica," said Daniel Ortega Saavedra, coordinator of the Nicaraguan junta.

In an interview Monday night, Mr. Ortega offered no evidence but said the arms shipments, starting late last year, were destined for Edén Pastora Gómez, the Nicaraguan leader who turned against the Sandinists, and other anti-Sandinists. He described the weapons as similar to those that he said the C.I.A. had sent to the rebel groups operating from Honduras.

The shipments showed, Mr. Ortega said, that the United States was interested in "opening a new front in the south." He said they had taken place "behind the back of the Costa Rican Government."

Missile Report Derided

Mr. Ortega and other Nicaraguan officials seemed apprehensive about the speech on Central America President Reagan is scheduled to make before a joint session of Congress Wednesday night.

Apparently anxious to M of criticism expected from President Reagan, he called a news conference Monday evening in which he addressed points of friction between Nicaragua and the United States.

He rejected "emphatically and definitively" that Nicaragua intended to install Soviet missiles, a notion that he said "has arisen only in the mind" of the United States Administration. "Our country will never be turned into the military base of anyone," he said.

Mr. Ortega charged President Reagan had lied about Nicaragua's missile plans because of his "despair to justify his unjustifiable warlike policy" before the United States Congress and international opinion.

He noted that Nicaragua had asked for "international cooperation" to defend itself against outside aggression and said it would continue to do so.

'Innumerable Military Flights'

Mr. Ortega said that "innumerable U.S. military flights" had transported "military equipment and war matériel" from United States bases in Panama to Honduras in recent weeks. The United States had also made 11 spy flights over Nicaragua this month, he said.

He repeated Nicaragua's denials that it is shipping arms to Salvadoran guerrillas and challenged Washington to prove its charges of this "alleged principal worry."

Although only minor clashes between guerrillas and Nicaraguan forces have been reported in the northern mountains in recent days, officials here said that groups totaling 3,500 men were gathering along the border in Honduras for a new invasion and that some 700 men were ready in Costa Rica to cross into Nicaragua in the south.

This has been given as the reason for the postponement by Interior Minister Tomás Borge of a planned visit to Canada. Although the capital continues to be quiet, troops and militiamen have been placed on the alert all over the country.